RC-S217

CALI-FORNIA WILD FLOWERS

FROM
WATER-COLOR
DRAWINGS
BY
ELISABETH
HALLOWELL
SAUNDERS

RP
S257

CALIFORNIA WILD FLOWERS

12 Reproductions in Natural Colors from Water Color Drawings

BY

ELISABETH HALLOWELL SAUNDERS

CALIFORNIA POPPY

PRICKLY PHLOX

BRODIAEA

CREAM-CUPS

MONKEY FLOWER

OWL'S CLOVER

INDIAN PAINT-BRUSH

WILD PANSY

MARIPOSA TULIP

WILD HELIOTROPE

SHOOTING STAR

SCARLET BUGLER

CALIFORNIA POPPY
(Eschscholtzia Californica)

A German poet-naturalist, Adelbert von Chamisso, who visited the California coast about a century ago, was the first to describe this flower to the world. He gave it its formidable botanical name, primarily in honor of a fellow-scientist and secondarily in commemoration of the land of the flower's nativity.

The season of the California Poppy's most abundant bloom is from January to May, but one need not be surprised to find the blossoms during any month of the year.

The petals are either orange or a clear yellow, and occasionally are white—but always with a lovely satiny sheen which is the despair of painters.

PRICKLY PHLOX
(Gilia Californica)

Set like wild roses in gipsy hair, the bright rose-pink blossoms of the Prickly Phlox grow amid the dark tangle of the chaparral in the late spring and early summer, and during their season are among the commonest of wild flowers in Southern California.

A favorite habitat of the plant is on dry hills, whence another popular name for it is Mountain Pink. It is also abundant on those tracts of semi-desert which everywhere in the Land of Sunshine, lie close to the green borders of the irrigated country.

The curious leaves of the Prickly Phlox, which are sharp and rigid like spines, are a formidable armor to the plant and make the flowers as difficult to gather as thistle blooms.

BRODIAEA
(Brodiaea capitata)

Children and country folk know this lovely common flower by the unpoetic name of "wild onion," because it springs from an edible bulb shaped not unlike that vegetable. It may be found in bloom from February to May amid the wayside grasses and on the sunny hillsides—its clustered blossoms at the summit of slender, swaying stalks, varying from deep blue to delicate lilac or even white.

This is one of the California flowers that can be counted upon to preserve their freshness when mailed "back east." If well developed buds—not open flowers—are selected and packed at once in damp wrapping, they will stand a trip of five or six days in the mail bags and expand upon being set in a vase of water at the end of the journey.

CREAM-CUPS
(Platystemon Californicus)

This wild flower's blushing buds dotted with tiny bristling hairs and drooping shyly on their slender stalks, are so much like buds of the poppies of an old-fashioned garden, that one is not surprised to learn of the plant's relationship with the poppy tribe.

The creamy cups of bloom begin to appear in March amid the grasses of the fields and waysides where they are often as thick as buttercups in an Eastern meadow.

The clustered, necklace-like seedpods which succeed the flowers are an interesting feature of the plant's life-history.

MONKEY FLOWER
(Mimulus luteus)

The Monkey Flowers are among the most characteristic of California wildings and exist in numerous species and in many colors. The yellow variety, here depicted, is abundant in Southern California, where it loves to take up its abode in cañons and by the margin of streams.

The gaping corolla, suggesting to some active imagination the grinning countenance of an ape, is responsible for the popular name. The loveliness of the flower is deserving of a more poetic one.

OWL'S CLOVER

(Orthocarpus purpurascens)

In March or April the meadows and the slopes of the foothills in some localities are dyed magenta with extensive patches of the Owl's Clover. Perhaps to the vision of the burrowing owls which frequent such places, the showy heads of bloom may pass for clover tops, and so the quaint common name may be accounted for, but as a matter of fact the plant is not at all akin to the clover. "Escobita" is the Spanish name, meaning "little broom."

The relationship of this flower is most closely with the Indian Paint-brush, from which, however, it is readily distinguished by the little puffed-up, white sacs that form a prominent feature of the corolla's lower half.

INDIAN PAINT-BRUSH

(Castilleia latifolia)

This fiery beauty of the California spring is a Western cousin of the Painted-cup, so familiar in the grassy swales of the East. As in the case of the latter, the brilliant color that betokens the plant's presence is due not to the flower but to a scarlet-tipped leafy sheath in which the flower is partially enveloped.

There are several species of Indian Paint-brush, one of which is abundant on dry hillsides and in desert places, where it is often seen flaming out from amid the scrub and cactuses.

The variety here depicted is indigenous in the neighborhood of Monterey and thence northward near the coast.

WILD PANSY

(Viola pedunculata)

The common blue violets, which in May are so abundant in the Eastern States, are not indigenous at all to California. A charming substitute, however, is the blue violet's cousin with larger flowers, the Wild Pansy, with cheerful golden-yellow petals, two of which are dashed on the outside with warm brown. The blossoms are borne on slender, upright stalks, sometimes two feet in length.

One finds the Wild Pansies sparingly as early as February and in abundance in April and May, in the meadows and on the edges of the barley fields, as well as in woodlands.

MARIPOSA TULIP

(Calochortus venustus)

In late spring and early summer upon the fading grasslands and on the dry sunny slopes of the hills, the Mariposa Tulips set their long-stemmed chalices of delicate color. Bulbous plants of the lily family, they are frequently called Mariposa Lilies, but as a matter of fact their relationship is very near to the true tulips of the Old World, and like the latter, they have been extensively introduced into cultivation both in this country and abroad.

The petals are often conspicuously marked with lines and dots and eye-like spots in a manner that suggests the gay wings of a butterfly, whence the term "Mariposa," which is the Spanish word for that insect.

WILD HELIOTROPE

(Phacelia tanacetifolia)

The heliotrope color of the blossoms of this plant and their arrangement upon an uncoiling spiral, have given rise to the name by which it is popularly known, but the exquisite fragrance of its domesticated namesake is entirely lacking in the wild flower.

It is so common from March till June throughout Southern California in almost all situations, as to be counted little better than a weed. The bees are exceedingly fond of the nectar which the flowers secrete, and the plant ranks among the best of honey producers.

SHOOTING STAR
(Dodecatheon Clevelandi)

February usually finds this charming member of the primrose family in bloom in the meadows and on grassy slopes where it lingers usually until well into May.

Few California wild flowers are more beloved than this, as is attested by the numerous names which popular fancy has attached to it. Thus, besides Shooting Star it is call Twelve Gods, Wild Cyclamen, Mad Violet, Mosquito Bill, Prairie Pointer, etc.

Children, the world over, have a propensity to gather certain flowers and fight them against one another in mock battles, and in California the Shooting Star generally plays this role. The flowers are hooked together and then violently pulled apart, when off goes one head or the other. Hence another common name for the flower—"Rooster Head."

SCARLET BUGLER
(Penstemon centranthifolius)

This showy flower is probably most abundant in the mountains. From February to June or even later the vivid red blooms, arranged in loose spires sometimes two feet in length, gleam out from amid the scrub of the hillsides like a myriad darting sparkles of flame.

The slender, tubular corollas, suggesting in shape so many bugles, are not unlike the trumpets of the coral honeysuckle that clambers about old-fashioned country porches in the East. In consequence, the California flower is not infrequently called honeysuckle, though incorrectly, as it belongs to quite another family—that of the snapdragon.

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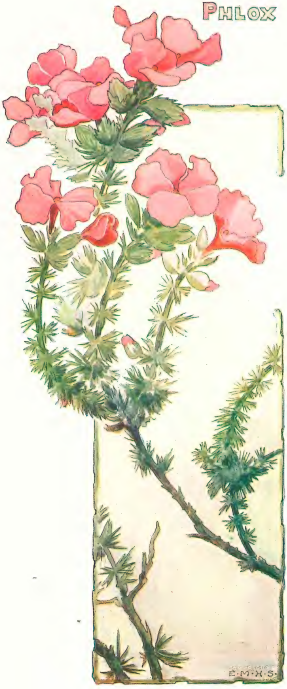
CALIFORNIA
POPPY
E.M.K.S.

PRICKLY
PHLOX

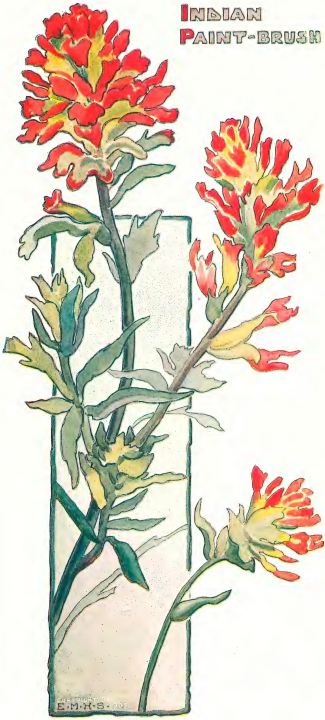


BRODIAEA

CREAM
CUPS

MONKEY
FLOWER

OWL'S
CLOVER
E.P.K.S.


INDIAN
PAINT-BRUSH

WILD
PANSY
E·M·H·S·

MARIPOSA
TVLIP
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WILD
HELIO-
TROPE
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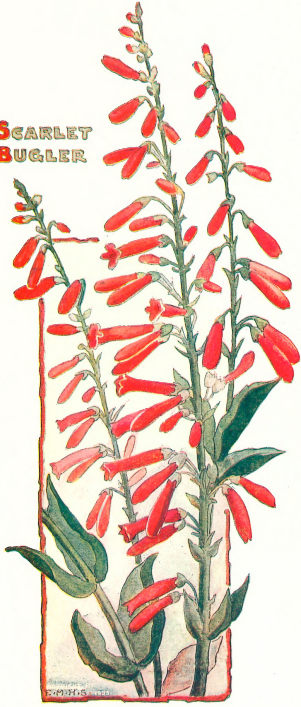
SHOOTING STAR


SCARLET
BUGLER

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